

Protective Factors

Protective Factors are the positive conditions, personal and social resources that promote resiliency and reduce the potential for youth suicide as well as other related high-risk behaviors. Just as suicide risks rise from an interaction between familial, genetic, and environmental factors, so do protective factors. They help keep risk factors from becoming overwhelming.

Internal/Personal Protective Factors

- Dominant attitudes, values, and norms prohibiting suicide, including strong beliefs about the meaning and value of life
- Life skills (i.e., decision-making, problem-solving, anger management, conflict management, and social skills)
- Good health, access to health care
- Best friends, supportive significant others
- Religious/spiritual beliefs
- A healthy fear of risky behavior, pain
- Hope for the future
- Sobriety
- Medical compliance
- Good impulse control
- Strong sense of self-worth
- A sense of personal control

External/Environmental Protective Factors

- Strong interpersonal bonds, particularly with family members and other caring adults
- Opportunities to participate in and contribute to school and/or community projects/activities
- A reasonably safe, stable environment
- Difficult access to lethal means
- Responsibilities/duties to others
- Pets